

SECOND THOUGHTS
ON THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF
PREDESTINATION,
ELECTION, REPROBATION,
AND
FUTURE PUNISHMENTS,

OCCASIONED BY

Archbishop KING's Treatise on the Origin of Evil,

AS TRANSLATED and ILLUSTRATED by the very learned and worthy
BISHOP OF CARLISLE.

TO WHICH WILL BE ADDED, A NEW EDITION OF

A Lapse of Souls in a State of Preexistence
the only *Original Sin*,

[The ORIGIN of EVIL therefore of Course]

And CHIEF CORNER STONE of the Gospel Dispensation.

K

By CAPEL BERRROW, A. M.
RECTOR of ROSSINGTON, YORKSHIRE.

LONDON,

PRINTED FOR J. DODSLEY IN PALL MALL.

SECOND THOUGHTS

ON THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF

PREDDESTINATION

LECTION, REPROBATION,

AND

FUTURE PUNISHMENTS



ERRATUM.

Page 3, Line 1, for *their* matters read *she* matters.

A leaf of bark in a state of decay
the only Original

THE ORIGIN OF EVIL
AND CHIEF CORNER STONE OF THE GOSPEL

By CARL BERNOW, A.M.
Rector of Roslington, Yorkshire

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR J. DODDSEY IN FLEET STREET

TO THE MOST REVEREND

WILLIAM Lord Archbishop of *York*

A N D

PRIMATE OF ENGLAND.

MY LORD,

AS I know not to whom but to you, my DIOCESAN, I can with equal propriety take the liberty of dedicating the following Attempt to render perfectly intelligible and unexceptionable to the most limited, as well as more enlarged capacities, some *theological* Topics of Enquiry universally interesting—*momentous*; so neither can I doubt of its being perused by your Grace with all those candid allowances which cannot but flow from the breast of one in whom, added to the transcendent greatness of the *established* Christian and moral man, are happily united the SCHOLAR, the loyal SUBJECT, the benevolent and respectable PRELATE.

Wishing your Grace a long enjoyment of health, and every other desirable possession in life, I remain,

MY LORD,

Your most obedient

Humble Servant,

*Fermyn Street,
June 4, 1782.*

CAPEL BERROW.

TO THE MOST REVEREND

WILLIAM LORD ARCHBISHOP OF YORK

A N D

PRIMATE OF ENGLAND

MY LORD,



As I have the honor to inform you, my
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great greatness of the spirit of Christian and moral man, are
ly unite the SCHOLAR, the ROYAL SERVANT, the PATRIOT,
and respect to TRUTH.

Wishing your Grace a long enjoyment of health, and every
other desirable possession in life, I remain,

MY LORD,

Your most obedient

Humble Servant,

CAROL BARRON

Given under
the Great Seal
this 4th day of
June 1782.

SECOND THOUGHTS,

Θc. Θc. Θc.

“ **W**HEN God, says the Translator, is said to *predetermine* and fore-
“ *ordain* all things according to the council of his will, the
“ importance of the expression is, that all things depend on
“ God, as much *as if* he had settled them according to a certain *scheme*
“ or *design*, which he had voluntarily framed in his own mind, without
“ regard had to any other consideration, than his mere will and pleasure—
“ that these attributes are ascribed to him by way of *analogy* and compari-
“ son, as *love, mercy, and other passions.*”

A mode of reasoning this, in which, by a critical enquiry made into the etymological import of the word *προορίζω*, termed in English, to *predestinate*; I am lead at last to allow, that there lies a greater shew of propriety than I could at first deduce from it; the verb *προορίζω* being a *Syriac* term, signifying to *brand* or set a mark (such as shepherds do with an hot branding iron, containing the *initials of the owner's name*, upon the bodies of the *sheep* under their care) with which they are, from time to time, turned into their respective pens or sheep-folds. In allusion to which practice, says our Saviour, *I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine*; such as are those who come under the scripture appellation of *προορισμένοι, εκλεκτοί*, the *predestinated, the elect*, viz. the first converted *Christianized Jews*. *And other sheep I have* (continues our Saviour) *which are not of this flock*; meaning by them, as I apprehend, the *Gentile world*—those to whom our Saviour alludes, when he says, Matt. viii. 11,

For I say unto you, that many shall come from the east, and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.

But the children of the kingdom, i. e. children born of those parents to whom the kingdom originally belonged, viz. those Jews, who, agreeably to our Saviour's prophecy, were to be *cast out*; such as are those *αποδοκιμαζόμενοι*, those rejected and dispersed Jews of the present day, waiting the redemption of the purchased possession, Ephes. i. 14—the *αδοκιμοι*, the non satis probati, the as yet, unapproved, of the tribe of Israel; these, says our Saviour, *εκληθσονται εις το σκοτος*, shall be cast out into utter darkness, Matt. viii. 12. i. e. shall be in a state most remote from *spiritual* gratifications, replete with nought but *weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth*—alluding to St. Peter's energetic mode of reasoning with those of the *circumcision*, to whom is directed his second epistle, penned with a view of directing *their* attention to God's dealings with the sullen race of Adam, from their first expulsion from heaven into this diversified vale of misery, man's terrestrial abode; an assured opening to a just recompence of reward, in that state, where *the Lord shall wipe away all tears from all faces*. Agreeably to which speaks the prophet Ezekiel, Chap. xxxvii. v. 21.

“ Thus saith the Lord God,

“ Behold I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen
“ whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring
“ them into their own land upon the mountains of Israel, and one king
“ shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations,
“ neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all.

23. Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols,
“ &c.”

So far down then we find scripture prophecies concerning a part of the sons of men, without regard had to any other consideration, than his own will and pleasure, and with no conclusion, deducible from the events, in justification of any interpretation of those scripture terms, *predestination, election, or reprobation*, than what is merely analogical, or comparative.

But

But how does this idea, with respect to their matters, quadrate, perhaps you will say, with God's declaration to Jeremiah? "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest out of thy mother I gave thee wisdom, c. i. 5." *An express* declaration this of God to the prophet, that before his (the prophet's) entrance into the womb, he (the Almighty) had *foreordained* him to the office to which he had called him, in like manner as were Josias, Cyrus, John the Baptist, co-operating instruments *foreordained* of God for conducting the gospel plan of universal redemption.

And again, how are the Archbishop's sentiments reconcilable with the tenor of the apostle's eighth chapter to the Romans; an epistle penned with a particular view to administer consolation to some, who were then labouring under affliction, in consequence of their zeal for the christian cause, and the method taken for the purpose being—what? why a declaration in *express terms*, that they were not afflicted by chance, nor yet for their purposed destruction, but from a *preordained, preconcerted* intention of Heaven, to render their transient sufferings here conducive to a future emolument spiritual and everlasting.

28. For we know, says he, that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are *called* according to his purpose.

29. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren.

N. B. Moreover, whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, i. e. as say the *Assembly of divines* upon the passage, whom he did *foreknow* he also *foreordained* to a conformity both in *grace and glory* with his Son their head; as the first born was wont to be in all families among that people. Coloss. i. 15—18—And this by way of analogy, says the Archbishop, and with great propriety I think; for *ὡς πρωτότοκος*, the *preterperfect*, is used for the *present tense*, intentionally to intimate, that God's providence operated

operated then, as it did from the foundation of the world, from the *very beginning of things*, and will continue to do invariably forever, in favour of those who act in conformity to the rectitude of his will and proceedings among men; to elucidate which position the *preter-perfect* is, as I said, used to represent the then *present*, or any *subsequent* eventual proceedings of divine providence, as necessary consequences of an eternal unoriginated cause of all causes and effects whatever, i. e. a perennial stream of mercy and compassion, the *fountain head* of which is God. And how comfortable a consideration this to those who are the *ἐκλεκτοί*, *the called of God*, resting assured, as they justly may, that, in proportion to their sufferings in this world, will be their respective rewards in the next.

These, such as these, are the scripture *προορισθέντες*, the predestinated, the *elect*, those whom God is pleased to *mark for his own*; these the types of him their great *antitype*, who was himself *made perfect*—by what means? *by sufferings*.

The reverse to these, with respect to *their* situation in life, are those who, being tried, *like as silver* is tried, by the fiery furnace of affliction, and remaining still *unapproved*, i. e. *unpurified*, are the authors, the *sole* authors of their calamities, be they more or less, and are those whom the apostle justly ranks among the *αδοκιμοί*, the *tried*, and (on *trial*) disapproved of; in contradistinction to the *ἐκλεκτοί κατὰ πρόγνωσιν Θεοῦ πατρός*—those *tried* and *approved* of, viz. the *elect* according to the *foreknowledge* of God the Father.

And herein consists the true scripture doctrine of *predestination*, *election*, and *reprobation*.

With respect to the *nature* and *duration* of *future punishments*, as set forth in the sacred pages, that is evidently determinable solely by the import of the term *αἰώνιος*, which implies, as I have, I imagine, elsewhere sufficiently evinced, a *limited* duration only—a truth corroborated by the gospel promises of a future *general restitution of all things*; concerning which, see the following account from *Origen*, as elucidated by the late pious Bishop Rust.

EXTRACTS

EXTRACTS

From a DISCOURSE concerning

ORIGINE.

THE *mystery* of the *resurrection*, says he, is this, that we shall be clothed with *ethereal* bodies; that after long periods of time those who shall have been consigned to *future torments* will be delivered from those torments, and become inhabitants of such regions of the universe as their natures fit them for; that the earth after its *conflagration* shall become habitable again, and be the mansion of men and animals, &c. and that in eternal vicissitudes.

First, The *mystery* of the *resurrection* is this, that we shall be clothed with *ethereal* bodies.

What is the truth in *this* opinion must be learned, says the author of this discourse, from the faith and doctrine of the gospel, of which it is so eminent an article, the great *foundation* of our holy faith and obedience; and

the whole *Evangelical* mystery, so far as it respects our good and advantage, is for the recovery of mankind to this high pitch of felicity; and the *pious father* does most willingly resolve his belief in this opinion into the sentence of those infallible writings. But that you may have a more orderly and demonstrative understanding of what they teach us in this matter, you are to recall to your memory something of what I have before discoursed out of the *father*; that so you may with one view see how coherent his speculations are, and how much they confirm and are confirmed by the doctrine of the Gospel. He affirms with confidence, that the souls of men are spirits *essentially incorporate*; that such spirits depend much in all their operations on that body they are united with; that the elements of our *terrestrial* composition are such as almost fatally entangle us in vice, passion and misery; that these souls did exist and act (for to what purpose else did they exist?) before they became visible inhabitants of the earth; that therefore they then had at least *aerial* bodies; that the purer the body with which the soul is united, the purer, more perfect and happy is her life and operations; besides, that Supreme Goodness which made all things, assures us, that he made all things best at first. And therefore his recovery of us to our lost happiness (which is the design and purpose of the Gospel) must restore us to our better bodies and more happy habitation. In the declaration of which recovery, if it be found that he promises us *celestial* bodies, it will be both according to what our reason would expect in so gracious a design, and does also not obscurely intimate that *earth* was not the first element wherein we did exist. Upon these *principles* the *father* establishes the present *dogma*, some of which we have already largely endeavoured to prove; the rest are plain of themselves, and confessed by all, or it is easy to have the accurate proofs of them if you think they can be doubted of: and therefore I shall leave you to make the best of them for the advantage of the *father's* present *assertion*, betaking myself to see what Scripture says in the business, after I have taken two arguments in my way, which I shall offer to your consideration in a more careless and popular manner.

1. He that is a Christian and Disciple of the Son of God hath given up himself to the observation of such laws as require of him perfect holiness and purity, universal abstinence from all wrong and injustice, hearty and unfeigned love and good will to all mankind; and all this in the inward affection

affection of his mind, so that they become his nature and the very life of his Spirit. He is by the tenor of that holy *institute* to mortify every inordinate affection, to be dead to the sense of bodily delights, not to be carried away with self-conceit and the tickling air of fame and honour from men, not to be transported with anger, to have no esteem of those things the world so much admires, and so eagerly pursues, power and wealth: but cut off from all things that are without, and perfectly commanding all the allowed motions and desires of his natural spirit, he is solely to live the life of God with entire subjection to his will. But do not all the world complain of the extreme difficulty of the task? that it is as cruel to their imagination when they think of it, and as painful to their sense when they go about it, as the violent discission of their very life would be, could it be forcibly torn in pieces? Not but their *minds* are very well satisfied of the reasonableness and justness of such an undertaking, and their most inward light cannot but pronounce that the possession of that life they are called to by the counsels and exhortations of the Gospel would be a state of most desirable felicity; so that if the *law* of their *mind* had a perfect sovereignty over the whole man, the business was done. But alas! they are drawn away by the pleasing force of the *magic* of the *flesh*, and in despite of all the succour which their mind, reason and conscience bring, they are willingly led captive by an enemy whom they love. This is the *law of the members*, whose very nature is *warring* and opposition to the *law of the mind*: it is also called the will, sense, or *affection of the flesh*, which hath such an essential enmity to God, and whatever is divine, that it can *by no means be made subject* to his law. For the *body of death*, or the mortal body is, according to St. Paul, *sinful flesh in which dwells nothing that is good*, and the law of it is the *law of sin and death*. And that *members, flesh, body, death*, are to be taken plainly and literally, both St. Paul's discourse makes evident enough, and the experience and confessions of men confirm; who palpably feel that their transgressing the laws of God and the mind proceeds from the motions of the *earthly* body with which they are cloathed. Now these motions being as natural to it as *descent* is to heavy bodies, and as necessarily affecting us with the sense of sin, as fire does with warmth and heat; it follows, that our establishment in a truly divine and sinless life, which is the end of Christian Religion, cannot be affected but by our obtaining such a body as is farthest removed from the nature of our present *body of sin*, that is, an heavenly or ethereal one.

2. You cannot but have observed even in those who are instructors of the people in knowledge and piety, men, otherwise learned and of good capacity, a strange fatal proneness to such opinions as are as plainly repugnant and contradictory to the most easy and natural *ideas* of our mind as any can be: of which opinions many are concerning such subjects whose worth and excellency should make us very careful what we think of them, and always tender that we pronounce nothing of them which is injurious or mean; as God, his works, and counsels, what is holy, righteous, comely, equitable, and the like; whose natures rightly known and according to truth, bring the greatest ease and satisfaction, ineffable peace and quiet, and the most pure and inravishing delight that our minds can receive from any knowledge whatever, and govern all the purposes and enterprises of our soul, all the actions of our lives consistently, quicken and encourage us to all growth and progress in virtue, and whatever is good and laudable, and with unshaken fortitude support our hope, that our labours shall not be in vain; lastly, which are also with abundant clearness defined in those holy oracles which we all believe infallible. Whence is it then that all that light which should direct us to the truth of such objects is not seen? that we are so easily content to want all that pleasure and peace arising from the knowledge of their truth; and patiently endure to live, act, and expect at random without any sufficient grounds or coherency of reason? If the souls of men were essentially unlike one another, or the *ideas* of truth were not every where the same, my wonder would quickly cease: nay, if these erring persons were but affected with their odd conceits in that moderate degree of prejudice which authority is apt to beget in us, where we respect the man who first delivered them to us, I could be content to look for the reason of this *phenomenon* in the modesty and humble deference of the mind itself: but when I see them believe such gross errors with such eagerness of spirit, and with so settled an affection, and from a congruity and sympathy of vital disposition, I am at a loss to find the cause any where but in the complexional impurity of their *earthly* bodies; whose foul steams mixing with and infecting that subtle instrument the soul uses in all her senses and perceptions, and by which all her operations are modified, condemn them fatally to such gross mistakes, and to an utter insensibility of the contrary truths, so long as they are condemned to see nothing but through such a coarse *medium*, and to labour for truth with such unqualified

qualified instruments. And knowing that not only virtue and piety, but also truth and knowledge are the natural accomplishments of the soul, I conclude, according to the *father*, that that complete perfection, which, by the warrant of the Gospel, we hope for in the *resurrection*, cannot be wrought in us unless we be possessed of such a body, whose purity of temper will be as subservient to truth, as I find the terrestrial one an hindrance thereto.

3. I said at the beginning of this *dogma*, that the truth of it must be decided by the testimony of holy scripture, whereof it is so important a part, and that the *holy father* is most ready to be concluded by its decision; therefore in the third place he argues from thence. You know St. Paul in his first *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, hath a discourse on purpose concerning the *resurrection*; from thence therefore, if any where, we may very well hope to find a determination of the matter in hand. The *Apostle*, in that most excellent and learned discourse, having first proved the resurrection of our ever-blessed Lord and Saviour, comes at last to answer the objections of some incredulous and misinformed men in that church, which he gives us in these words, *How are the dead raised up? and with what bodies do they come?* In which, if there be any sense or force to make it worthy of an answer from the *Apostle*, it must be this or some such like; How is it possible that those bodies should rise again and be joined to the souls that formerly actuated them, which we see rotted in the grave, dissolved into dust, and scattered over the face of the earth, or evaporated into air, and dispersed as far asunder possibly as the heaven is wide, and undergo ten thousand several transmutations, and are adopted into as many several bodies, whether animals or others? To which the *Apostle* answers, not by saying the power of God is infinite, and his knowledge infinitely distinct, so as he can find out and recollect all those wandering *atoms*, and of them recompose that building which once they made: but by calling *first* the objector *fool* for so grossly mistaking the question, as if the Christians expected the same *individual* body made of the same numerical particles of matter, which his objection supposes; whereas their doctrine of the *resurrection* is somewhat like that of a grain of corn, which must first die before any thing spring of it, and that which does spring up from its death is another thing from that which is sown and died. And then, *secondly*, by further informing him,

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that the differences of body and matter are far more numerous than he takes notice of; so that it is so far from being necessary that we should have the same *individual* bodies, that there is no necessity we should have bodies of the same sort or *kind*: for the world is better stored than so, and contains *celestial* bodies as well as *terrestrial*, of different worth and excellency; and that God who gives us a body as it pleases him, is graciously pleased to give us one in the *resurrection* of that kind which is most excellent and glorious, *viz. heavenly and spiritual*; and that though we have borne the *image of the earthly Adam*, having an earthly body as he had, yet it is not necessary we shall always do so; for there is an *heavenly Adam* too, the *Lord*, whose *image we shall bear*, having an *heavenly and spiritual body* as he hath. And lest we should mistake what he meant by *earthly* and *heavenly*, *animal* and *spiritual bodies*, and transfer these words to dispositions in the soul, or use them improperly any other way to the countenancing any gross or low conceit, he gives us a key of his meaning by this plain and downright affirmation, that *flesh and blood* (a phrase well known to signify the *earthly body*, and for its sake *a man in such a body*) cannot come to heaven, or *the kingdom of God*; for it is impossible that such a body, which is in its intrinsical nature corruptible, should become incorruptible, or be fit to *inherit incorruption*. And further, you may possibly not think it a remark altogether impertinent, that if the *Apostle* had been of the mind of *Origen's* adversaries, it would be very hard to imagine why he should give so long, so distinct and particular an answer to the question. For it may seem more suitable to the authority of so great a person, when captiously asked, *With what bodies do they come?* roundly to have answered, *With the same they left behind them*.

Another argument out of the same *Apostle* may be that in his *second Epistle* to the same *Corinth*. *For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle was dissolved, we have a building from God, an house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.* Where are plainly described two several houses or bodies quite different one from the other in their *materials*, *duration*, and *benefit* to the inhabitant: the one is called *earthly*, and a *tabernacle* which shall be *dissolved*, wherein we *groan* through the *burthensomeness* of it; the other *heavenly*, and *eternal*, and hugely advantageous and desirable

ble to us: the former characters designing the *body* we have here upon *earth*, the latter *that* which we expect hereafter in *heaven*. So that unless any thing may be any thing, and the same thing while the same be quite another thing, it is not possible but that that body we look for in heaven, or at the resurrection, should be a quite different thing from that body of *flesh and blood* we are now cloathed with, since it hath such different properties. For unless the coarse concretion of *earth* as earth can be as liquid as *æther* or heavenly matter, and that which is in its own nature *dissoluble* be *eternal*, and be actually dissolved only to be set together again, or that we groan through the oppression of that weight which we earnestly desire to be burthened with again, the body which we have here cannot (according to the *Apostle*) be that which we hope to have hereafter. And all the properties of the former body will, from its essential contexture, necessarily adhere to it wherever it be, and the properties of the latter are the most genuine results of *ethereal* purity; so that if *St. Paul*, by the *building* we are to have from God, by the *house not made with hands*, describes that body God will give us in the resurrection of the just, he says the same with the *holy father*, that the mystery of that happy time and change is this, that we shall then be cloathed with heavenly or *ethereal* bodies.

This is sufficient for the proof of this assertion out of scripture; yet if you please you may over and above make trial, whether any convenient sense can be made of those so very frequent phrases of a *mortal* body, a *corruptible* body, a body of *death*, a *vile* body, an *inglorious* and *infirm* body, a *dead* body, the *flesh of sin*, and the like; if such bodies may be incorruptible, immortal, eternally living, never to die more; refulgent with lucid glory like the body of Christ, who is the *Adam* *συνεπαι*, in the same sense that the other *Adam* was *χοϊκ*, and lastly, be the instruments of perfect purity, righteousness and holiness. I persuade myself you will find it an hard task to reconcile such discordant attributes. But to say that whatever the bodies we have upon earth be in their own nature, God by his omnipotent power can make them such as the Gospel promises they shall be at the resurrection, and keep them by his almighty hand from death or decay, is to say, that *miracles* are very cheap with him; nay further, it is to say that God, where he intends us a benefit, will work a perpetual miracle to keep us in a worse state than we might arrive to by the ordinary laws and course of nature. For it is demonstrable from philosophy and apparitions, that
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an *aerial* body will necessarily fall to our share upon the quitting of *this* we have; and where the soul is more than ordinarily advanced in the progress of an holy and virtuous life, that *aerial* body of her's will be in great disposition to an *ethereal* purity: so that if the *Providence* of God would not interpose herself, but leave things in that state they come to by her eternal laws, it would be much better for so perfect souls to stay where they are, than to be again clothed with *flesh and blood*. For this is plainly to climb downwards, and with pretence of courtesy to remand the released man to his prison and chains. And it is very childish to think that *flesh and blood* made gay without by I know not what imagined *light* and *glory*, is one pin the better for it; for if the house be ruinous in the materials and make of it, and fluttish and unclean within, all the external painting and pargetting imaginable can neither secure the inhabitant from its fall; nor make their dwelling one jot more wholesome. The *moon*, as bright as she looks, is as very an *earth* as this we tread on, contemn, and desire to leave. But as hard as you will find it to make sense of those *phrases* above-named which characterize our *earthly* body, if this earthly body is to come to heaven; just so easy and natural are the opposite expressions which describe that *heavenly* body which shall certainly come thither. For both the duration of it, its refulgent glory, and its eximious subserviency to all purity, righteousness and truth, do as properly belong to a body of *ethereal* purity, and this only as any natural effect whatever to its true and specific cause, as a very little skill in philosophy would satisfy any inquirer. And what greater assurance can any man have that he understands any thing he reads, than evidently to see that the words are fit and apposite, and the very same that all men use who write or speak perspicuously, and the *things* asserted such as exactly answer to the nature of things?

Having scripture so plainly on *our* side (for so for *decorum* sake I must speak, playing the part of an *Origenist*) I think I may be bold to expostulate with the *adversaries*, and ask them what it is they seek by their so eagerly-defended *fleshy* body, and what is the prop of their tenacious confidence? For 'tis plain that we are nothing and are concerned in nothing more than what we are *conscious of*, feel and perceive; that the soul *alone* is the subject of all sense, perception, memory and affections; that what she *perceives by*, is neither the flesh nor blood, no nor the brains themselves,

nor

nor any other gross part of our bodies, but that purer and subtiler matter in us which is called *animal spirits*; that if the soul be an immaterial substance distinct from the body, 'tis as easily conceived, nay more easily, how she should unite with an whole *vehicle* of such pure matter as with her whole *terrestrial* body; especially she giving us, even in this body a *specimen* of that capacity of her's, by being in her highest degree of vitality united with some portion of matter already. What is it then that they expect from the most refined *flesh and blood* they can imagine, which they may not have with usury and advantage in a body of purer consistence? or what is the scruple that makes them so backward in admitting such a body? To the former question, I make no doubt they can answer nothing which will not be gross and ridiculous. To the latter, I know they will say that the scripture says otherwise: we shall see that more particularly at the *issue*. In the mean time consider, O ye fond doters on flesh and blood, what we have already produced out of that sacred treasury of truth contrary to your dull pretensions: and further call to mind, that as scripture calls those bodies we hope for in the resurrection of the just *celestial* and *spiritual*, and terms the place of our abode at that blessed time the kingdom of *Heaven* and the inheritance in *Light*; so philosophy and astronomy can demonstrate that the matter of that happy place is mere *light* and liquid *spirit* or *aether*. Why then do you pretend misinterpreted Scripture contrary to all reason, philosophy, and your own benefit, against Scripture, having philosophy, and your advantage on its side? and since our present bodies by which we are inhabitants of the earth are of a *terrestrial* concretion, and consist of such matter which arises from the earth, and which after all its *transmutations*, *elutriations*, and *filtrations* in the body, is not purged from the coarse tincture it had from its earthly original; and since the Scripture says that angels, the inhabitants of Heaven, are spirits and a flame of fire, and are called angels of light, as Heaven itself is light and fire, and appear always in a lucid form, and that the *Devils* or *Demons* are the inhabitants of the air (whom the stories of apparitions and the confessions of witches plainly prove to have bodies of air;) what crossness and madness is it to believe we shall be fellow-citizens of the angels in the kingdom of *Heaven*, and have such a body, as the Apostle calls *heavenly* and *spiritual*, and yet to interpret that word *heavenly* otherwise than in relation to the subtilty and tenuity of the matter of Heaven; but to leave these *φιλοσοφικοι*, and let you

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further see that St. Paul did not only sit at the feet of Gamaliel (from whom Mr. Gregory conceives he learned the analogy between the germination of a grain of corn and the resurrection of the body) but had also been admitted into the Pythagoric *ομακοισιν*, or rather that both he and the divine Pythagoras were taught by the same spirit of truth and holy knowledge, I will give you a taste of that great congruity of phrase there is in the delivery of their doctrine. And not to trouble you with many authors of that way, I will content myself with Hierocles in his commentary on the golden verses, as they are called. The body of flesh we have here upon earth, he, with St. Paul, calls *σῆμα* and *ψυχικόν*; that which the pure and perfected spirits in heaven have, he with him calls *πνευμαλικόν*, as also *φωτεινόν* and *αυροειδές*, which plainly answers to St. Paul's *σῶμα τῆς δόξης*. He likewise terms it *ἀθάνατον*, and *αἰδιόν*, and *αἰθεριόν*, which is exactly the same with St. Paul's *having put on immortality*, and *eternal*, and *heavenly*. He says likewise, that in order to our heavenly journey we must first *τῇ σῆμα σωματικῇ φύσιν αποδυσασθαι*, and that the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* cannot ascend *εἰς τὸν αἰθεριόν τοπον*. What is this but that *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*? And again—*τὴ σῆμα ἡμῶν σωματικῇ, ὡς τὸ αὐροειδές ἐγκυτάι* *προσώπων τῇ αἰσχυρῇ σωματικῇ ζωῇ*. *ζωὴ γὰρ ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸν σῶμα*. Than which it is not possible to find a better comment upon that of St. Paul, — *Clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, that mortality might be swallowed up of life*. Again; — *τὸ σῆμα ἡμῶν σῶμα ἐκ τῆς αἰσχυρῆς ζωῆς ἢ τῇ ὑλικῇ σωματικῇ συγκείμενον, ἰδὺλον οὐ τῇ αἰσχυρῇ, ὡς ἐκ λογικῆς ὑστίας ἢ σωματικῇ αὐτῇ συνίσταται*. St. Paul's outward and inward man, the earthly and the heavenly Adam. He says also, that the spiritual vehicle of the soul being perfected and purged from all material *unvitalness* or mortality, and the lucid body being rendered pure and defæcate, we are then fit to be admitted into the company and converse of the pure spirits which have ethereal bodies, and are then arrived to the angelic nature: which in the words of Scripture is, *But ye are come to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of just men made perfect*. — *They are equal to the angels, and are the children of God* [*Ἰδοὺ in Hierocl.*] *being the children of the resurrection*. — *If by any means I might attain to the resurrection of the dead. Not as if I had already attained, or was already perfected*. Lastly, that I draw the parallel no further, in this theory of bodies he uses the words of *ἐπιγειρίν* and *αναβιωσασθαι*. I need not tell you, much less shew you, that he does not use such words alone.

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I shall trouble you with no more examples, these being sufficient and clear and apposite enough (chiefly some of the first of them, which I especially intended) to shew you the agreement in stile between St. Paul and Hierocles. Now the use I make of it is this—it is notoriously known, that the *Pythagoric* or *Platonic* doctrine concerning the different states of spirits incorporate, is the same with *Origen's*; and that the words and phrases they use to express the different nature of the body by, with which they are cloathed, are as fit and proper (if their doctrine be true) as any that can be invented, is plain to every one that understands the use of words. Now that St. Paul should use the same in the same matter and argument, yet not in the same sense, but a quite different one, is the most unlikely thing in the world; and besides, renders all endeavours of finding his sense and meaning utterly frustrate or desperately uncertain. But if St. Paul used them in the same sense with those *philosophers*, then it is manifest that *Origen's* doctrine of the *resurrection* is the same with St. Paul's, and therefore infallibly true.

There is a reverend *doctor* of our Church, of eximious piety and learning (and long may he live to be a light in this perverse generation, and the envy of those that are adversaries and afflictors of our dear Mother) whom I have heard to be of opinion, that this *Hierocles* of whom we have been speaking was a *Christian*, and who intends to encrease the number of his learned and useful writings, with a *dissertation* to prove the same. If this report of him be true, I make no doubt but amongst other arguments which have persuaded him to entertain this *paradox*, the great agreement in doctrine and phrase betwixt the holy pen-men of Scripture and that author, is not the least. But to the verifying of my conjecture, you must expect till that reported *work* of his see the light.

I come now to the *Father's* other opinion, viz. that after long periods of time, those who shall be consigned to *future torments*, will be *delivered* from those torments, and become inhabitants of such regions of the world as their natures fit them for.

There are in some men's minds, says the author of the discourse, wonderful high reaches at great and unusual objects: that disposition of soul
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whence such extraordinary offers proceed you may not improperly call the *magnificence* of the *intellect*; which often hath something of temerity in it, as the *moral* virtue of that name not seldom hath some touch of ambition. But as we are very favourable to this, and apt to pardon its smaller extravagances, for the sake of those high designs and eminent works to which they adhere: so by the same reason and justice ought that other to be candidly sentenced by us when it seems to slip, because of those raised and concerning discoveries it makes where it lights right and happily; especially where it seems to have been betrayed by a forward and pious endeavour of doing honour to God. Which is *Origen's* case here; of whom his greatest adversaries cannot in reason but confess, that the *error* they conceive him fallen into in this opinion proceeded from his over-great solicitude of rendering the ways of *Providence* clear, righteous and benign. Yet this, as strange as it looks, hath its probabilities too as well as the former. For he looked upon God as making all things for their good and benefit, with this gracious design, that they might be happy according to their place and order in the infinite *orb of beings*. Some whereof would necessarily be so far removed from the stability of his blessed and immutable perfection, that he plainly foresaw and wondered not at their future change and descent from their original integrity; which though it would not happen to them without their own fault, yet his most just and righteous eyes could not but more favourably look upon the miscarriage, since it proceeded somewhat from that *impossibility* which his own hands had wrought in their essential contexture, and from a too-free and careless use of such natural powers and enjoyment of such delights as he himself had made, and permitted to them in due bounds and measures. For it seems true, and not dishonourable to God, that sin itself proceeds from no power of the sinner's own making, neither is the pleasure of it from any suitableness and congruity which he devised; for he finds them both made ready to his hand: only he was so careless and unhappy as to transpose things from their due places, and make such combinations of them as were to his own damage in the event, and such as were not primarily intended by that most wise and benevolent *Mind* which made and ordered all things to the best they were capable of.

That *Eternal Mind* therefore making all things out of a principle of infinite love, and for the good and happiness of the things themselves, and
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seeing what he had made and how he had made them, and what was likely to be the lot of some of them from the necessary unperfectness of their natures, if their future ill hap was like to be infinitely more sharp and dolorous than all the good they should enjoy from him till that calamity befel them grateful and pleasant, his great compassion certainly would have persuaded him quickly to annihilate them; or rather his wisdom would have judged it more decorous never to have made them. For assuredly he needed them not in any respect, least of all as they were miserable. But we see such *mutable* creatures made, and hear nothing of their *annihilation*; (as indeed it would be very strange we should, for this would be as much as to say, God had made such *beings* as he could not continue in being with consistency with his own attributes: that I may not add that possibly such was the manner of the production of all things as makes *annihilation* impossible) therefore we may be assured there are such reserves in his most wise and gracious *providence*, as will both vindicate his sovereign goodness and wisdom from all just disparagement, and take such course with, and so dispose of all his creatures, as they shall never be but in such a condition, which, all things considered, will be far more eligible than never to have been. Amongst which ways and dispositions of *Providence*, wherein his wisdom, rectitude and mercy all concur, *punishment* is not the least, nor unprofitable to the punished. And this sharper kind of favour hath a very just and righteous place in such creatures as are by nature mutable. For this natural mutability passed not into an actual declination from their better principles of life without their *fault*, and suffering a possibility of being worse to prevail above an actual power of continuing better. And therefore *Providence* hath interwove in the natures of things, and all states and conditions of life, such acerbities and incommodities as may give check to them when they are descending lower than they ought, and seasonably remind them of the better condition they have left.

But if this gentler smart and uneasiness will not reclaim them, but they for all that still further pursue forbidden and uncertain pleasures, and think them not dearly bought though mixed with bitterness; yet we are not straight to conclude that *Providence* hath given them over, either as utterly unfit for her care and discipline, or degenerated beyond her power of cure

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and emendation. For beside her ordinary and natural ways of nurture and correction, she can, and will, when it seems fit or necessary, with a severer hand scourge these rebels to her gentler laws, and contemners of her milder rebukes. And such will be that *day of fiery vengeance*, when the inferior elements of nature shall melt with fervent heat, the earth and all the works thereon be burnt up, and the air be filled with suffocating smoak, which she shall send up from her inflamed entrails. Into which far-spreading lake of slow-consuming fire and sulphureous stench the unreclaimable devils and obstinately-wicked men shall be, by the righteous hand of God, precipitated. A sad pitiable fate and torture unsufferable! but no doubt as just as great. Just, I say, not only according to the estimation of modern *theology* (which from an excess of compliment to the justice of God becomes almost as rude and troublesome as the ass in the fable, who did not fawn upon, but invade his master, and which tragically pronounces, that the least *peccadillo* highly deserves the greatest punishment conceivable;) but also in the compute and judgment of that all-righteous *Mind* which judges and orders all things by the living law of equity. But what though it be so great and just, is it therefore so quite different from the reason of all other punishments inflicted by God or man, that there is nothing in it of that *end* for which they are inflicted? They are *curative*, and for the emendation of the party suffering; but this, if it be eternal in the *scholastic* sense of the word, leaves no place for the bettering of the sufferers, who are never to get out of this inexplicable labyrinth of woe and misery. Or because this exceeds all other punishments imaginable, must it also so infinitely transcend the very measures and proportions of this kind of *distributive justice*? If not, why should we think that the pain and smart of it shall be infinitely great and long, when the pleasure reaped by the transgression which brought the punishment is not in any degree equal; and when a shorter torture may make the punished change their mind, or leave it as very probable they would do were they out of their torture, and in an opportunity to shew it? And to imagine that God suffers any real injury and detriment from the transgressions of a peccable creature, which must (say they) be infinite, because he is so, and therefore deserve a punishment in all respects infinite, is to talk of God very meanly, and too much after the manner of men; and to set such a rule for the measuring the demerit of a fault by, as will make all sins equal, and which they themselves confess

confess will not universally hold good towards any person besides God, and therefore may be justly suspected to be a false one.

Now to think these miserable souls are so far amiss as to be beyond the power of all redress and restitution, is to suppose God made some of his creatures very untowardly; and that when he pronounced they were all *very good*, he looked only upon the primitive state they were in when they came fresh out of his gracious hands, and was so taken with that, that he omitted to cast his all-comprehensive eyes to all possible conditions they might afterwards fall into. For certainly if he had done so, and seen this never-to-be-ended doom of intolerable pain and anguish of body and mind, the infinite compassionateness of his blessed nature would scarcely have given so chearful an approbation to the works of his hands. For none of them are *good* to him, as advantaging him ought; and those of them he foresaw would be so remedilessly calamitous as this *hypothesis* supposes, would have been so far from being *good* as to themselves, that it would have been the greatest favour God could do to them never to have brought them into being. But then to think they are not beyond the power of redress and recovery, and that that great punishment they shall undergo in the end of this world, may contribute much thereto, and yet to imagine they shall for all this their better disposition be still kept in it for ever and ever, is to fix so harsh a note upon the mercy and equity of the righteous Judge of all the world, that the same temper in a man we should for ever execrate and abominate. And that they are in a possibility of being better, if God so please, and do not purposely hinder it, is not improbably concluded by the father from hence, That sin wherein they are so obdurately settled, though it hath extinguished or silenced the *divine life* in them, and for the present subjected them only to the sense, relish and exercise of the natural or *animal*, yet it hath left them their reason and understanding, such as it is, consideration and memory, which, like mercenary soldiers, will fight on either side, and incline to and serve that *life* which is most powerful: if therefore the vigorous alliciency of the brutish nature be abated, those *powers* will listen to better counsels, and resume the seeds and inchoation of a better life and nature. And certainly a searching, ceaseless pain, spreading through soul and body, will so abate and consume all that joy they formerly took in their brutish rebellion, that
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any offer of release will be welcome to them now the tumult and hurry of their former lusts and eager affections is slackened, which alone before made them incapable of better advice; and their close-adhering pain which sticks to them, and scorches them worse than *Hercules's shirt*, should, methinks, necessarily force them to take up strong and peremptory resolutions and indignation against those courses, whose fruits they now feel so direful to them.

What is it then that should make the merciful *Governor* of heaven and earth and *hell* too, the compassionate *Father of spirits*, either forcibly to keep off and prevent this natural course of things, or, which is worse, suffer those offers and preparations which it induces for the bettering the present condition of so great and so considerable a part of his creation, and for the putting of them in a way of return to what he at first made them, to come to nought? If we look but into the *natural world*, we shall find that no disposition of matter to the susception of life is rendered void and frustrate; but that there is always ready at hand so fruitful a *principle* as perfects and completes whatever is presented to its further vivification: and yet this *principle* is but the *brute* obscure shadow of that Almighty *Goodness* and exuberant *life*, which actuates and manages the moral and intellectual world. Surely then no preparation happens here which is not carried onwards as far as it is capable; especially since this may be done, and yet these miserable souls we are speaking of, pay soundly for their rebellious transgressions by a very long, exceeding great, and intolerable torture, both of body and mind. And indeed, by how much greater it is, by so much surer may we be that it will sometimes have an end by the necessity of nature. *Si gravis, brevis*, takes place here too; for it being unconceivable how the soul should suffer any pain or torture, but by the harsh and discordant motions of the body wherewith she is vitally united, if this union ever cease, she will become senseless; and this union being conditional upon certain terms on both sides, and the conditions being such as are not necessarily at all times present to either of them, it may very well be thought that it may be dissolved. For if the induction of an unnatural foulness and impurity, or an over vehement agitation into the blood and spirits, and other fluid parts of the body, if old age itself can make the soul quit her unfit tenement, what shall we think she will do when it is all on fire,

fire, when all the motions of it are but one continued great pain? Which disposition of body when come to its height by long continuance, is certainly far more contrary to that vital temper the soul requires in the body she will livingly join with, than either coarseness of blood, or consumption of animal moisture. For as if any actually-perceived pleasure was that which tempted and drew out the soul to join with her body, no man would say she would ever unite with that body from whose cross constitution she should be affected with nought but pain: so where that congruity in her which disposes her to that union is more deeply pitched in her *imperceptive powers*, a man would be apt to think nevertheless, that she could not vitally take hold of any body from conjunction with which she should after feel no motions but such as would torture her. And we may easily persuade ourselves, that that disposition of body which will not prolicite the soul to join with it when she is free, and her *unfelt appetite* catching, cannot for ever tie her to it when forced upon her by her sad fate. And the matter she is then surrounded with, being all of that *unvital* temper, it seems necessary that she should cease from all life and sense. So that whithersoever we look, whether to the gracious providence of God, or the necessity of the nature of things, we find some probable hope that the punishment of the *damned*, as it implies the sense of pain, shall not be *eternal* in the highest sense of the word. And the Scripture too may seem to favour us, in that it calls this dreadful doom by the name of *eternal death*, which one would think did very strangely set out that state and condition wherein is the highest and most pungent sense; but it does very appositely express the sense of *Origen's* hypothesis explained after the latter and more probable way. But whether their release be by any change wrought in the disposition of their spirits, but without *death*, or whether by an *escape*, as it were, by *dying* to the body so tortured, there is no doubt to be made, but that both ways they may come into play again, and try their fortunes once more in such regions of the world as Providence judges fit for them. For all things were made that they might have their being, and such of them as are capable of life and sense, and yet never exercise it, had as good not be at all, for they would be useless both to themselves and others; but certainly there never were, nor ever will be, such things in the world, which was created, and is governed by that *eternal Mind* which does nothing foolishly and in vain. And though that raging fire which will in the consummation of all things seize upon

the earth, will render it and the adjoining *atmosphere* uninhabitable for the present; yet that this ruinous defacement of things will extend through the whole compass of nature, is neither the belief of *Christians*, nor the assertion of such *philosophers* as were, through their skill in the constitution of the world, fit to judge of such *theories*. And therefore if any man can conceive any of these souls which shall be punished in that *sulphureous lake* fit to emerge out of it, he need not be at a loss for habitations for them elsewhere.

But if the other way be more probable, that there is no getting out but by *death*, which is rather a dying *in* it; yet since they therefore only die because the matter all about them is then such as they cannot livingly unite with it, though their radical principles of vitality are still safe and unperishable; and since that matter which for the present is so deadly, is as capable as ever of such modifications as are vital and healthful, and will even by the course of nature, after long periods of time, settle again into such a wholesome temper; what should hinder but that these punished souls, whom long vexing pain drove from all commerce with matter, and cast them into a senseless sleep, will after their long inactivity awake again into life and action, when all things are become so fresh and fit to receive them? For if *Providence* hath been so favourable as to establish so gracious an order in the nature and course of things as will lead those miserable spirits to a *release* at last, *she* certainly will not be unwilling that they should live again when all things conspire to give them life, and they continue capable of receiving it. But I am stepping, methinks, before I was aware, says the author, into the last opinion of the *learned father*, which is this, viz.

That the earth after her *conflagration* shall become habitable again, and be the mansion of *men* and other *animals*, and this in *eternal vicissitudes*.

The *philosopher* in his *politics* says, those instruments are the best contrived, and do their work best, which serve but *one* effect and end. But surely it is an argument of a larger and more comprehensive wisdom, to make one and the same thing serve to several good purposes; as we see *Providence* hath done both in the bodies of particular *animals*, and also of that great and *universal* one the world. And the same course *she* takes in the *conflagration*

conflagration of the earth; for that *one* fire will be the just and salutary punishment of rebellious spirits, and the restoration of the earth grown old and effete unto an healthful genital strength and verdure. And so wonderfully sportful is she (as I may so speak with reverence) in the government of the world, and the ascents and descents of her great *wheel* are so unexpected, and so seemingly unlike one another, (yet the same hand and counsel turns all, and to the same end) that that very region of the world, and the face of things in it, which even now seemed miserable and forlorn, and the region of malediction, a delivery from which was thought well bought at the price of *death* and utter insensibility, even this at the next succeeding *roll* becomes a flourishing paradise, thick set with vigorous life, and adorned with all the charms and gaiety of fresh youthful pleasure. For the *holy father* might think it no extravagant conjecture, to imagine that the process and consequences of that great fire will be somewhat the same with those we daily observe upon earth in bodies subjected to the operation of fire, most of which consist of a twofold principle, the one more dense and solid, the other subtle and tenuous: but when fire is applied to the whole, and spreads its insinuating active *atoms* through every commixture of parts where either it finds or can make its way, the finer and more agitable particles, by this new heat and motion got amongst them, issue out in smoke and vapour from those places of restraint where they before lay more still, into the free and open air; but the more heavy and solid are left behind, as which the too-subtle parts of fire, notwithstanding all their activity, could not carry away with them, being overpowered by their excess of magnitude. And though we observe not any farther progress in ordinary fires, and care not what becomes of the evaporated parts of the consumed body; yet where either use or curiosity leads our observation on further, and we would not have those parts dissipated and lost, we then find that they which steamed forth in a vaporous rarity, being kept in by fit *receivers*, and falling in closely with one another, do at last fall down again in a watery consistence, retaining the same nature they had before they were forced out of the body they belonged to. And if the *return* of this descending dew was so ordered, that it might have time enough to insinuate itself again equally through all the vacuities it made in the body by its departure, it would no doubt bind and consolidate the looser parts thereof, and tincture the whole concretion with its specific virtue and qualities.

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For this is no more than letting ground wrought out of heart lie fallow for some years, and it again will answer the hopes and reward the labour of its tiller.

Though this example of the ordinary operation of fire and its consequences, for many reasons, falls short of those advantages for vitality and fertility, which may be expected from the *conflagration* of the *earth*; yet as it is, it lets us see, in some measure, what will be the necessary effect of that piece of divine *chemistry*, in which seas and rivers, and all the evaporable parts of the upper region of the earth, (for the *metallic* regions below are too solid to be much concerned in this matter) and all things thereon, will in a thick confused cloud, mount aloft and cover the face of heaven, filling the air with pitchy darkness; but their own gravity, and that cause which limits the extent of the *atmosphere*, will necessarily keep them below the purer regions of heaven or *aether*: so that rolling up and down in the lower vault of heaven, and kept yet from descending by that smothering heat that is amongst them, that intense fire under them, and the continual ascent of new vaporous steams, they will at last, when these causes abate, and themselves become more crowded and confert through their excessive copiousness, fall down in trickling dewy showers, and mix again with that great heap of *ashes* which covers the face of the earth, and make her fruitful and vegetative, and fill her emptied channels with wholesome streams; the air also will be kindly cooled and moistened by those long-descending showers which pass through it. So that so far as concerns material preparations of life, here may be a *new* world again, if God so please. And unless he purposely put a stop to the course of nature, the great *principle* of vegetative life will necessarily shape the matter, when duly modified, into all kind of trees, plants, herbs and flowers; for the inferior *spirit of the world* acts not by choice, but fatally; and being essentially stored with universal *seminality*, will not fail to bring her treasure into view, when invited by congruous and sequacious dispositions of matter. And methinks it is very odd there should be so fair and pleasant a garden, and none to enjoy the fruits and fragrancy of it. But if philosophy hath rightly determined that the souls of *brutes* are spirits (which for my own part I think is done with demonstrative evidence) and therefore remain

main after all fates whatever undiminshable and indissipable in their entire substances, we need not fear those pleasant fruits will grow up and die un-enjoyed.

For let the conciliating principle of *souls* and *matter* be what it will, either *spermatic* only, or *sensitive* too, the souls of *brutes* will not fail to unite with it now it is become so fit. If the former, their exasperation into life will then be as necessary as the growth of herbs and flowers: if the latter, then, since the pleasures of sensitive life are the top of the felicity they are capable of, and consequently their strongest desires are bent thitherward and without any check, they will as certainly unite with matter whereby they may enjoy them, as they will eat meat cast to them when their appetite is edged with a keen hunger. But since the former is more rational, and is found in the souls of *men* and *demons* as well as beasts, what should hinder it from having the same effect in all, and so both earth and air be again replenished with their respective inhabitants; and for the earth it may be further said, that the *decorum* and *congruity* of the thing persuades it. For since there seems little less than a necessity that she should be furnished with all manner of fruits and *brute animals*, and that the greatest part and chiefest kinds of those fruits are such as are either little regarded or cannot be come at by the beasts, (that I may not add how quickly the soil where they grow and the plants that bear them will decay and come to nothing without human culture;) and further, since many *species* of beasts themselves seem so made with relation to man, that without him they would be ill provided for, or too much exposed to such as would prey upon them, and the exercise of their chief powers could not be called forth, and many appetites and affections which hugely please them would find little or no gratification; this congruity of things, I say, would almost persuade one that *man* ought also to appear on the earth, to be the father of this great family, the lord, governor, patron and defender of all the creatures therein. And there is nothing in the nature of God to make us doubt of the truth of these pleasant conjectures, but much which favours them. For, for these better and more perfect spirits to continue yet in being, and yet to be kept for ever dead and senseless, is to fill the world with that which is perfectly useless and in vain, (as I intimated above;)

and to be capable not only of life, but also upon a new trial of their fortune to be in more than a possibility of making a better choice than that they paid so dearly for, and of returning in due time to that state of holiness and felicity God made them for, (to all which worthy purposes they may now have a fair opportunity) and yet after all this to say that God is so far from furthering and helping on these hopeful beginnings, that, on the contrary, by a peremptory will and violent hand he strangles them, is at least to say this, that there is no certain nor probable arguing from the attributes of God, by which I, through a certain infirmity of my nature, was always the most strongly convinced that I was by any way of arguing whatever. But if a man may with any probability argue from the nature of God in such subjects and about such effects as depend on his operation; I, in the person of *Origen*, desire his adversaries briefly to compare the state of things after the *conflagration* of the earth with that which they say was before any thing was made. God was then infinitely good and kind, and by that his infinite goodness was moved to create the world; such is he still, for his blessed nature is immutable. The things afterward created by him were not then in being; here they are all in being, and want only his *permissive* or *ordering* hand of Providence. They were then only in a *possibility* of being well and happily made; here they are in the very next step to being so even by the necessary laws of nature. Those reasonable creatures he then made were not indeed sinners and transgressors; yet they were made of such a nature as they might very likely become such afterward, and they have now soundly smarted for it, and have been afflicted even unto *death*, and at this term revenge itself stops: then certainly just and righteous punishment inflicted by the *Father of Mercies* and Father of the punished will not go beyond it; which if it do not, it will be very hard for them to give any tolerable reason why the earth shall not become habitable again after her *conflagration* and *purification* by fire, and be the mansion of *men* and other *animals*, as well as it was in the first production of it.

This is the first part of the *father's* opinion; but if this *first* was granted for true, and but *one* restoration of the earth and replanting of her with all her proper inhabitants was acknowledged, he that believes this would find no difficulty in believing that eternal *vicissitude* and infinite repetition

of *conflagrations* and *re-productions* which in the *second* part of the *dogma* he asserts. For since nothing perishes out of the compass of universal nature, neither *spirit* nor *matter*, it is plain there will be always ready at hand both the materials and inhabitants of the *thousandth* habitable *earth* as well as of the *second*; and that most benign *principle* which made and governs all things, is neither lessened nor changed at that *thousandth* period from what it was at the *second*.

You may now possibly expect that the *pious father* should confirm his doctrine out of scripture, as in most of the former he did. But here he bids you call to mind the advertisement he gave you at the beginning of the *second dogma*, and consider how necessary and decorous it was that the holy pen-man of Scripture should not run out into such abstruse natural *theories*, which so few of those they were to *christianize* would be capable of, but keep themselves within the bounds of those few plain articles which were necessary to the reforming the world, and begetting in the minds of the simplest a firm hope of life and immortality hereafter, and deterring all men from the ways of sin and unrighteousness by that sad after-clap they must expect in the end of this world, leaving all further considerations not repugnant to these to the laudable curiosity of such as nature and education had fitted for such enquiries. Yet will he not wholly frustrate your expectation, for I find him making use of these following places of Scripture in behalf of his opinion; *Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou endurest; yea all of them shall wax old like a garment: as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same.* Where he says such a *perishing* is *exegetically* signified, both of the earth and regions of the air, as is consistent with *but a change*; but where there is only a change the substance is not destroyed. And this change being as the change of a garment worn out or decaying, supposes not only a change for another, (which it certainly does, unless he that hath worn out one garment, and after goes naked, be said to change his cloaths) but also for a newer and better. Also that of St. Paul, *The fashion of this world passes away*, i. e. like a *turning scene*, to exhibit a fresh and new representation of things; and if only the *οικουα* of *this world*, or the present outward

ward dress and appearance of things, go off, the substance is supposed to remain intire. And that of the prophet *Isaiab*, *Behold I make new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind.* How exactly does this agree with his *hypothesis*, whether you interpret the latter part of it concerning the excellency of the vernant youth and spring of the renewed world above the squalid and decrepit age of the old one, or concerning that perfect *oblivion* in the inhabitants of the new that ever they lived before the old? And that that *new heavens* and *new earth* may be understood in a *physical* sense, both *St. Peter* and *St. John* make it not utterly improbable; nor though our *translation* seems to lay an *emphasis* upon *we* in that place of *Peter*, as if the expected *new heavens* and *earth*, according to promise, were those habitations of glory which *Christ* shall give to his faithful subjects in his heavenly kingdom, is there any thing in the *Greek* which countenances such an *emphasis*. The whole is plainly thus, *That fire shall melt and dissolve all the combustible elements of nature; yet for all that, according as he hath promised, we expect there shall be new heavens and new earth, or heavens and earth again, whose inhabitants shall be better and more righteous than those of the decaying and corrupted world are.* And the vision of a *new heaven* and *new earth* in *St. John* does so immediately succeed the *universal judgment*, and the casting of death and *hades* into the lake of fire, that it would almost persuade a man that that is to succeed it also in order of time, since there is so great a congruity in the thing for it so to do. For suppose this opinion true, and to have been a part of the *apocalypitical visions*, what fitter and more natural place could you assign it amongst them than that it now hath, according to our present interpretation?

I will trouble you but with one argument more, though consisting of more texts than one, but all in the same epistle of *St. Peter*. *And spared not the old world, but preserved* ΟΤΑΟΟΝ ΝΟΕ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗΣ ΚΗΡΥΚΑ, *having brought the flood upon the world of the ungodly. This they are willingly ignorant of, that there were of old heavens and earth, consisting of and placed amidst the waters by the word of God. By which constitution of things the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and earth which now are by the same word are kept in store, reserved for fire at*
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the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. To these texts add that which we cited before, *but we look for new heavens and a new earth*; and then compare the several passages in them one with another: for example, the *physical* state and constitution of things before the *flood* is called the *old* or original *world*, the *then world*, the *heavens and earth* which were of *old*; that after the *flood* is called the *heavens and earth* which *now are*, and in respect of the former might as properly be called the *new world*, as that is called the *old world* in respect of it; that which is to succeed the burning of this, is (as we have conjectured) termed *new heavens* and a *new earth* in respect of the *second*. The *first* of these three worlds is said to *perish* or to be destroyed by water for the punishment of the ungodly, yet so as *Noah* was preserved to be a preacher of righteousness, as some interpreters expound it. The *second* is said to be reserved to the destruction of fire for the perdition of ungodly men, that so the *third* may be the habitation of righteousness.

Now since they are so distinctly described as several *worlds*, and since the changes happening to them are called *destructions* alike, and their ends are the same, to wit, the punishment of the ungodly: why should we imagine so vast a difference, that the destruction of the *first* should be followed with a new plantation of mankind by *Noah* and his sons, of animals by the pairs of each kind reserved in the ark, and of all kind of plants by their own fruitful seminalities, but nothing follow upon the destruction of the *second* but a perfect irrecoverable excision of all things; when yet the way that this is to be destroyed by does as naturally lead to a re-production as that of the other, but after a far longer time. There is one thing more I am to put you in mind of, which I had from a very good hand, concerning one of the texts above cited, to wit, about that odd disturbed order of words in this sentence, ἀλλ' οὐδοὶ Νωὶ δικαιοσύνης κερύκα ἰφυλάξει· for such it must needs seem according to that interpretation which makes it οὐδοὶ κερύκα· and that other which makes him be called οὐδοῦ, because he was one of the *eight* saved in the ark, is harsh, and without example in Scripture, so far as I remember. What then if there be a *mystery* in the business? (as you know numbers have been commonly used to this purpose by the ancient wisdom both holy and profane) and as *Enoch*, who was *translated*, is called

the *seventh* from *Adam*, as a type of that expected *sabbatism* in the last day of the *millennial hebdomade* and of this world: so *Noah*, who begun the world again, is called the *eighth*, (not from *Adam*) as a *figure* signifying this, that the simply-last period of this lower world was not then come to an end, but was still to be counted onward; and the production or drawing out of the existence of things being here *symbolically* taught, it would be more expressly done by reckoning upward in the *numeral scale*, than by beginning again at the *first* of that long *hebdomade*.

But enough of these fanciful conjectures, as also of the arguments from Scripture to confirm this last opinion of *Origen*. Unto all which if you in the person of others make answer and say, that there is no necessity that these places should be so interpreted as the *father* interprets them, but that other convenient senses may be put upon them, I am perfectly of your mind; but yet further reply:

First, That they whose answer you have formed for them are commonly so superstitious, that they will not admit of a *philosophical* conclusion, though warranted by the attributes of God and necessity of nature rightly understood, and be such as was not decorous nor becoming the simplicity of the Gospel to be expressly and of set purpose taught by the holy writers of Scripture, who were only to mind the greater and more necessary doctrines of Christian faith and life, unless it also bring the testimonials of Divine Writ.

Secondly, Though these *texts* should have a more especial respect to some other sense than that we have given them, yet why may it not be that our's also was intended in some degree by the *Holy Spirit*? for since the holiest and most intellectual persons would be very prone to fall into this opinion, which they plainly saw so worthy of God and consentaneous to reason, but yet could not but with some fearfulness fully embrace it, because like to be unusual and not in general vogue; it is not strange that some places of Scripture should be so contrived, as not obscurely to sing the same note their own thoughts had been harping on before, and so give boldness and assurance to their conceptions: for a little touch or in-

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timation would be enough for them so well prepared aforehand; and as for others, they either might not be fit for, or not deserve a plainer instruction.

Lastly, Whoever they be in whose name you have made this *exception*, of what church, sect, or way soever, I doubt not they would have far fewer articles in their creeds and confessions than they now probably have, and must profess the belief of fewer opinions than now 'tis likely they do, if so be they thought all groundless which were not built on such texts of Scripture as would admit of no other tolerable and plausible exposition than that they give of them. And therefore I demand of them in the *father's* behalf, that which they in equity ought not deny him, that his opinions stand as probably true, and the Scriptures cited by him as commodiously interpreted, till such time as they bring better arguments, more agreeing with the nature of things and the attributes of God, and clearer places of Scripture for the truth of the contrary.

I have now given you an account of those reasons and grounds the learned and pious *father* had for those *six* capital errors some of the ancients have charged him with, and under which attainder he still lies from their authority; and have therewith answered your *fourth quere*. Wherein I have punctually observed your commands, in giving you those reasons only by which I find him to have maintained his opinions; and have waved many other very material or plausible considerations for confirming the same, which some later authors have used with much danger, I have feared, to their less-settled (or, as they speak now-adays, free) readers; and have also omitted those injections rather than studied thoughts which my own melancholic fancy hath oft with too great importunity obtruded on my mind: which sometimes are so strong in me (I will not to you dissemble my infirmity) that all the charms of reverend names of churches, of articles, of confessions, of universally-approved systems, have had much ado to expel them, or so far abate their force, that I was not carried away by them from that stability and sobriety of spirit upon which I desire to build all my conceptions. Before I come to your *fifth quere*, I must crave pardon of his *venerable ashes*, if I have any where disadvantaged his cause, either

either by my unskilful management of his reasons, or by omitting any more considerable and convincing than those I have produced out of his writings. For the general opinion of the learned, that the translations of them were so sacrilegiously mangled and performed with so little judgment and faithfulness, made me never care to look much into them, since I could not be certain whether I read the mind of *Origen*, or some very mean author; and therefore I was now forced, that I might obey your commands in some measure, to tumble them over as my hand led me, and where by chance I spied any hopes that there was something there handled proper for my purpose, to use the best judgment I had in conjecturing which was likely to be the genuine issue of *Origen's* contemplative genius, and which the spurious interpolations of another. In which tumultuary labour 'tis no wonder if several things escaped me far more fit to appear in his defence than these are which by chance I light upon.

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